

REMARKS

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the interview conducted on August 2, 2007, during which the present invention, the cited art, and possible claim amendments were discussed.

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks.

By the foregoing amendment, claim 1 has been amended, and new claims 2-20 have been added. No new matter has been added. Thus, claims 1-20 are currently pending in the application and subject to examination.

In the Office Action dated June 6, 2007, claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,788,683 to Ikeda ("Ikeda"). It is noted that claim 1 has been amended. To the extent that the rejection remains applicable to the claims currently pending, the Applicants hereby traverse the rejection as follows.

The Applicants submit that Ikeda does not disclose or suggest a method for transmitting data according to a flow table, a flow key and one or more variables, including at least the combination of determining a most granular bit-value mask corresponding to at least one field extracted from a header of a data transmission from a mask table having a plurality of bit-value masks, and applying the determined bit-value mask to the at least one field, as recited in amended claim 1.

For at least this combination of reasons, the Applicants submit that claim 1, as amended, is allowable over the cited art. For similar reasons, the Applicants submit that claim 15 is likewise allowable. As claim 1 and 15 are allowable, the Applicants submit

that claims 2-14 and 16-20, which depend from allowable claims 1 and 15, are likewise allowable.

CONCLUSION

For all of the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the claims now pending patentability distinguish the present invention from the cited references. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and an issuance of a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner determine that any further action is necessary to place this application into condition for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned representative at the number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fee for this extension may be charged to our Deposit Account No. 01-2300. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fee deficiency or credit any overpayment associated with this communication to Deposit Account No. 01-2300 with reference to Attorney Docket No. 026215-00006.

Respectfully submitted,

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